

REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner required restriction of claims to one of the following: Invention I, claims 1 and 3-5; Invention II, claims 2 and 6; and Invention III, claims 7-10. Applicants hereby elect claims 7-10 with traverse.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's conclusion appears to be erroneous. The Examiner asserts that Invention I relates to "uniting sub-buses when data has to be transferred between them" and "making a bus longer by uniting several sub-buses", and invention III relates to "making a bus wider by uniting several sub-buses to increase the transfer capacity". The Examiner further asserts that Invention II "does not require the ability to widen a bus provided by invention III".

In fact, claim 1 is a method claim and claim 7 is a corresponding apparatus claim, and both claims relate to a similar bus structure, which has an increased transfer capacity in respect to a prior art bus structure. The increased capacity can be converted to reduced power consumption, if the increased capacity is not needed. In this way also, the claims of Invention II are similar to the claims of Invention III. Without Invention III, the use of Invention II might result in a decreased capacity.

In addition, the classifications identified by the examiner do not appear to correspond to "combination" and "subcombination" classifications. For instance, the Examiner puts Invention I in class 710 ("Electrical Computers And Digital Data Processing Systems: Input/Output"), subclass 314, "Intrasystem connection, Common protocol (e.g., PCI to PCI)", but puts Invention III in class 710, subclass 307, "Intrasystem connection, Variable or multiple bus width". However, claim 1 of Invention I contains no subject matter related to protocols and the claim is therefore more related to subclass 307 than subclass 314.

Further, the Examiner places Invention II into class 713, which is "Electrical Computers And Digital Processing Systems: Support", and subclass 320, "Computer Power Control, Power Conservation." While independent claim 2 of Invention II is directed toward

S.N. 10/735,052
Art Unit: 2111


selecting supply voltages of a sub-bus to a lower of two levels if certain conditions are met, independent claim 2 is also directed to a method for operating a bus of a system. This means that the same classes searched for Inventions I and III will still likely be searched when searching for Invention II.

On at least these grounds, it is submitted that the classes for claims of Inventions I, II and III can be searched with minimum consequence to the Examiner and therefore the restriction requirement of the Examiner is traversed. The Examiner is requested to reconsider the restriction.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the Examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

S.N. 10/735,052
Art Unit: 2111

Respectfully submitted:



Robert J. Mauri
Reg. No.: 41,180

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Date

Customer No.: 29683

HARRINGTON & SMITH, LLP
4 Research Drive
Shelton, CT 06484-6212

Telephone: (203)925-9400
Facsimile: (203)944-0245
email: rmauri@hspatent.com

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